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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 179
By Cole (Carter)

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Dr. Dennis Deese and the Hunter First Baptist church on the occasion of the dedication of the new worship center.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to pay tribute to those exemplary organizations that diligently work for the betterment of their fellow citizens, community and state; and

WHEREAS, Hunter First Baptist Church, located in the beautiful Stoney Creek Community of Carter County, Tennessee, was one of the largest and fastest growing churches in the area at the time of the Civil War; and

WHEREAS, formerly Watauga Baptist Church, it began its services in 1830 in a humble log cabin located west of the Stoney Creek Bridge with only 30 charter members, which included: W.W. Lyon, S.S. Stover, A. Pearce, J.L. Bowers, J.P. Vanhuss, P. Miller, T.E.R. Hunter, and Valentine Bowers; and

WHEREAS, Watauga Baptist Church was also one of the founding churches in the formation of the Watauga Association of Baptists in September, 1868. A year later, the First Anniversary Meeting of the Watauga Baptist Association was held at Watauga Baptist Church in 1869; and

WHEREAS, to accommodate the growing congregation, a framed structure was built on the original church site, but unfortunately a fire consumed the framed building in February 1928,

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destroying most of the church records. A new brick church was erected which served as church and schoolhouse for many years; and

WHEREAS, in 1949, a new church was built just west of the original church site across the Stoney Creek Bridge on Highway 91. Today this same beautiful building is still in service; and

WHEREAS, it was also about the time when the church changed its name from Watauga Baptist to Hunter First Baptist. The church building housed 16 rooms and a large assembly room; and

WHEREAS, throughout the years, several land purchases and building programs have been added to the ministry and outreach capability of Hunter First Baptist Church; and

WHEREAS, in 1963, a beautiful pastorium was constructed on a lot adjoining the church property. In 1972, a large two-story Educational Building with over 20 classrooms was added, and in 1980, a magnificent Christian Life Center was built just behind the Church Auditorium; and

WHEREAS, the church sanctuary remodeled and redecorated in 1980, at the time a new piano and organ were purchased; and

WHEREAS, on, September 15, 1980, Hunter First Baptist Church purchased its charter to begin one of the area's largest AWANA Children's Bible Clubs. Today the AWANA Club program reaches an average of 175 preschool and school age students each week; and

WHEREAS, another outreach ministry was started in March, 1987, when the Hunter Baptist Daycare and Learning Center opened its doors to the community. Today the program is functioning at its limit with 100 full-and part-time children, ranging from infants through 12 years old; and

WHEREAS, in September, 1988, the church purchased a lot adjacent to the nursery parking lot to be used for additional parking space, until future building goals have been put into motion; and

WHEREAS, May, 1994 marked the beginning of the "CHALLENGE TO BUILD" program, to construct a new 750 seat Worship Center, to be completed in May, 1997; and

WHEREAS, groundbreaking for the new 750 seat Worship Center was May 5, 1996. Special ceremonies were held and they received record offerings on this day during the 'CHEST OF JOASH" march; and

WHEREAS, Dedication Day Services for the new Worship Center were held on Sunday, April 6, 1997; and

WHEREAS, since its organization, Hunter First Baptist Church has been blessed with many fine leaders, who have been dedicated servants of God, including: Rev. Valentine Bowers - 1844, Rev. M.C. Newell - 1854, Rev.J.B. Stone - 1856, Rev.David Kitzmiller - 1858, 1876--1881, Rev.J.H. Hyder - 1860, Rev.L.L. Maples - 1867--1871, 1874 - 1875, 1882, Rev.J.J.F. Hyder - 1872, Rev. G.P. Faw - 1885, Rev. W.C. Patton - 1889, 1894, Rev. E.P. White - 1897 - 1898, Rev. W.P. Sorrell - 1900, Rev. M.B. Upchurch - 1902--1903, Rev. J.W. Richardson - 1906--1907, Rev. Rory Bowers - 1908, Rev. C.A. Barker - 1909--1910, Rev. James Stout - 1911--1912, Rev. H.Clay Wilson - 1913--1915, Interim Pastor - 1916, Rev. A.E. Hinkle -1917, Rev. C.P. Holland -1918, Rev. C.H. Cosby -1919, Rev. E.E. Hazelwood - 1921--1934, Rev.H.C. Hopkins - 1935, Rev. A.B. Griffin - 1936, Rev. E.J. Bramlet - 1937--1941, Rev. T.B. Freeman - 1942, Rev. Floyd Greer - 1943-1947, Rev. G.H. Glass - 1948--1949, Interim Pastor - 1950, Rev. H.M. Randall - 1951, Rev. Hobart Linkous - 1952--1954, Rev. Robert Pearsons - 1955, Rev. Billy Kelly - 1956--1957, Rev. James Allen - 1958--1961, Rev. Henry E. Colvard -1962--1991, Interim Pastor - 1991--1993, and Dr. Dennis Deese - 1993 --Present; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that we pause to specially recognize this special church and its members; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE-HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we honor and commend Dr. Dennis Deese and the congregation at the

Hunter First Baptist Church on the occasion of the dedication of the new worship center and wish them well in their future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.